

Pastor's Report to Council May 2022

The following is a summary of things for Council to know. This is for your information only. There are no specific actions, motions or decisions needed by Council.

- I. Activities since we last met
- II. Upcoming Activities
- III. Thinking 3, 2, 1
- IV. Google Workspace for Nonprofits

I. Activities since we last met

Although I do not ordinarily list such things in the Pastor's Report, I want to ensure that council is aware of the many activities that have occurred since we last met:

- Launched the search for a Children and Family Ministry Coordinator and a more permanent Communications Coordinator
 - Received and screened 41 applicants for the two postings
 - Screened 23 with preliminary phone calls
 - Invited 4 to initial interviews for Family Ministry, and 5 to initial interviews for Communications
 - Held a second interview with 1 candidate for Family Ministry
 - Planning to hold up to three second interviews for Communications
 - A challenge regarding the Communications Coordinator position is, "How flexible is the time?" Some candidates desire to work odd hours and a variable schedule. **Current position is that the hours are flexible, however, the effort to maintain the schedule, manage the work, and plan weekly schedule overlap should not require a great deal of additional effort on our part.**
- Implemented Google Workspace for Nonprofits (see below)
 - Configured Google Workspace
 - Moved existing @ FirstChurchWoodstock.org email addresses from GoDaddy to Google and migrated existing email history from GoDaddy server and/or local computers
 - Migrated existing, active @FirstChurchWoodstock.org email addresses from GoDaddy to Google in time to avoid GoDaddy's forced upcharge of \$13/user /month
 - Office, RevKev, Deacons, and Treasurer @FirstChurchWoodstock.org
 - Established new Workspace Accounts/email addresses
 - Leilani, Maria, Restructuring, TechMinistry, ValuesTeam
 - Gave TechMinistry and RevKev super admin authority
 - TechMinistry credentials have been shared with Bruce Staehle and Rick Singh
 - Created a shared GoogleDrive for the Communications Coordinator Search Team
 - Migrated YouTube brand channel into our Workspace
 - Began exploring workflow for time reporting
 - Addressed Migration issues, longstanding issue with MailChimp emails being flagged as SPAM
 - Addressed outbound and inbound email issues with Comcast.net
 - Began developing migration plan for non-managed "personal" email accounts and Google Drives that are used for FCCW ministry, e.g., OfficeFCCW@Gmail, TreasureFCCW@Gmail

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- Met with Woodstock Academy to refine plan and approach for supporting students
 - Contacted all who indicated they were interested in hosting for the summer to:
 - Share Academy letter and form
 - Let them know of an upcoming meeting for later this month to brief interested/potential hosts
- Restructuring Team and Vision/Values Team met multiple times to advance these important efforts
- Met with each of the four families to plan upcoming memorial services
- Began planning July and August Worship
 - Picked theme, scriptures
 - Worked with Pastor Sue to agree to dates when each would preach over the summer
 - Attended combined deacon meeting to begin organizing for the summer
- Offered Blessing, Prayer, and Land Acknowledgement at start of Marathon
- Met with Woodstock Cemetery Association
- Began a year-long, coaching through SNEUCC Together We Thrive initiative, as part of ongoing professional development and self-care. Sessions are every other Wednesday at 11am.

I note this activity of the past month is in addition to ongoing "regular" activities, Holy Week, and the Earth Day Intergenerational Worship.

II. Upcoming Activities

May 14, 8-12n attending Racial Justice Training (online) This will satisfy Windham Association requirements

May 14, 1pm Memorial for David Teed, anticipating high attendance

May 15, 10:30am Vision and Values kickoff, help encourage people to attend/engage

May 15, 4pm – 6:30pm Deacons celebration

May 21, 2pm Memorial for Paul Stanton

May 24, 9:30am Windham Association Council

May 28, 1pm Memorial for Linda Chase

May 30, offering prayer at war memorial on common 10:30am

June 5 is Pentecost

June 12 or 26, possible guest speaker, Lois Boyd; hope from the wisdom of the Nipmuc people

June 14 July/August Newsletter information due

June 16 5pm Windham Association Annual Meeting (Mansfield) followed by presentation by Amy Jill Levine

June 18 9am – 3pm SNEUCC Annual Meeting (online)

July 3, 9am at First, Rev. Sue preaching

July 10, 9am at First, Rev. Sue preaching

July 17, 9am at First, Rev. Kevin preaching

July 24, 9am at First, Rev. Kevin preaching

July 31, 9am at First, Rev. Sue preaching

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August 7, 9am at East, Rev. Kevin preaching
August 14, 9am at East, Rev. Kevin preaching
August 16, September/October Newsletter articles due
August 21, 9am at East, Rev. Kevin preaching
August 28, 9am at East, Rev. Sue preaching

September 4, 9am Labor Day weekend, worship at East Rev. Sue preaching
September 11, 10am Home Coming, worship at First

Given the number of activities on Saturdays in May, and the April-May activity level, I will be taking a weekday off each week in May. Vacation time has not been scheduled. The plan and my desire is to NOT take a month off in the summer. It is healthier, and more desirable to take a week in the spring, a couple of weeks together in the summer, and a week in the fall.

III. Thinking 3, 2, 1

As has been my practice, I end my monthly Pastor's Report sharing a thought, an idea, a tool, that may be helpful in our ministry.

This month, I want to suggest two things to consider:

- 1) 3, 2, 1 – Simply put, explore and creatively wonder about what is on the horizon 3 months out/or what we might want to do 3 months out
- 2) Focus on planning the who, what, when, and how of things that are 2 months out, and
- 3) Review and refine the execution details of items that are within the next month.

I offer this as a way of helping us all be more proactive, less stressed and better able to work through the ebbs and flows of the calendar. I have also found that thinking at least three months out, helps people who are very creative make connections and “play” with ideas. And we have very creative people in the congregation!

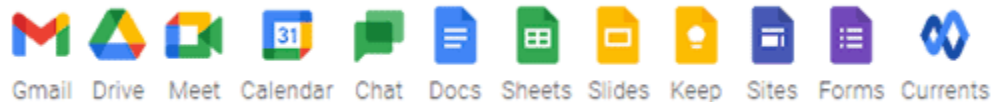
I also wonder what it might be like if boards, groups, and committees were to rethink how we organize and run our many meetings. There are several observations that I have.

- We often spend a lot of time on standard items (approve the minutes, old business, new business, etc.) rather than on the most important thing – whatever that might be in each month. With the exception of Congregational Meetings, which are governed by Roberts Rules, Committees, Boards, and Teams are free to create meetings that help the team focus on the most important pressing items, rather than mirror the agenda of the Congregational Meeting.
- A great deal of time is consumed with simple updates for which a group is not being consulted or a decision made.
- Pre-Covid the three-boards met on the same evening, shared a reflection, and the Pastor had a designated time with each team. My understanding is that the teams would focus on their time with the pastor to ask what needed to be asked and for the pastor to share what was needed. What might it take to return to such a format? Or at least to be more intentional regarding this time.

IV. Google Workspace for Non-Profits

Google Workspace for Nonprofits is a suite of Google products that are integrated and centrally managed to increase communication, collaboration, and impact.

The move not only provides email (for free) it brings with it the integration of a number of other tools and services including: Mail, Calendar, Google Office apps, video meetings, cloud based storage, and more.



Some of the many things we will be able to do, if we learn and use the technologies effectively include the following:

- Create an unlimited number of email addresses @firstchurchwoodstock.org
- Create team email addresses, aliases, and distribution lists
- Create a shared (Corporate) contact list, i.e., updated congregant information can be made available to deacons, board members, etc. with appropriate security
- Migrate, manage and maintain corporate documents and data in the cloud and as corporate not personal assets
- Establish workflows to automatically and electronically “move” documents, such as time sheets
- Increase access to shared documents at the corporate, team, and individual/group level
- Move individually hosted GoogleDrives into our workspace to increase collaboration and eliminate data loss when teams and leaders shift
- Integration with Google Voice for phone service/voice mail (addon)
- Eliminate the cost of Zoom and InstaChurch
- Avoid the cost of MS Office subscriptions
- Establish calendars with bookable timeslots for meetings, etc for any user with a firstchurch email address

Why this and why now?

- o It is FREE.
- o Our former email provider, GoDaddy, was forcing all email users to subscribe to Office 365 at a cost that would range from between \$6 and \$13/user per month.
- o Workspace provides the integration and tools to address longstanding issues
 - o FCCW documents and data is created, stored, and kept in individual email accounts, personal hard drives, individually managed/maintained cloud-based storage
 - o Emails get lost and deleted
 - o We spend time tracking down and recreating documents
 - o We have lost time and data because of a hard drive crash and when a volunteer or staff member leaves and does not pass on the account credentials or give access to the data

What are the next steps?

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1. Educate staff, volunteer, boards, committees, and teams
2. Migrate existing accounts and data
3. Create new accounts, GoogleGroups, GoogleSites, etc.
4. Implement Workflow for timesheets and explore potential for other approval processes, e.g., Building Use Request
5. Explore the cost of implementation of Google Voice vs. Spectrum Phone
6. Explore and experiment with Google Meets as alternative to Zoom (annual subscription renews in October)
7. Explore migration of webhost from GoDaddy to BlueHost or another that will support enhanced security and commerce for similar or reduced price

How can Council Help?

1. Take twenty minutes to become more familiar with Google Workspace
 - a) Read this introduction article
<https://thedigitalnonprofit.com/google-nonprofits/>
 - b) Watch this 2 minutes brief Google for Nonprofits Overview
<https://www.youtube.com/googlefornonprofits>
 - c) Watch this 10 minute Google Workspace Introduction
(You can ignore the intro and skip to [1:30](#) Email)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oUJA7AK27A>
 - d) Read this article 10 Google Workspace tips to work with remote teams
<https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9283051>
2. Help us identify existing “personal” accounts that committees, boards and teams are currently using, or have used in the past. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. TreasurerFCCW
 - b. DeaconsFCCW
 - c. HillChurch (email addresses)
 - d. GoogleDrives for Deacons, Trustees, Worship, Vision Team, Restructuring, Council
3. Identify FCCW accounts where contact information needs to be updated to reflect @FirstChurchWoodstock.org email addresses, rather than personal email addresses, e.g.,
 - a. GoDaddy web hosting identifies a personal Gmail address as contact that can now be updated to TechMinistry
 - b. WordPress website administrative Contact is a personal Yahoo address that can now be updated to TechMinistry
4. After reviewing the introduction items above, especially 1.d) “10 Google Workspace tips to work with remote teams” <https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9283051>

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- a. consider how you; your board, committee, ministry, team, group, etc. will benefit from using Google Workspace, e.g.,
 - i. Workspace account/email address
 - ii. Email distribution list
 - iii. Google Group
 - iv. Google Drive
 - v. Google Site
 - vi. GoogleMeet
- b. Work with the TechMinistry (currently Bruce S, Rick S, and Rev Kev) to explore getting started.